

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

- (X) Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- () Environmental Assessment
- () Categorical Exclusion
- () Finding No Significant Impact
- () Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

INFORMATIONAL CONTACTS

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SUMMARY

A. PURPOSE AND NEED / DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

1. Project Purpose and Need

US 50 is a primary connector from Ocean City to points west, including the remainder of the Delmarva Peninsula, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. The study area is located in Ocean City, in the northeastern portion of Worcester County, MD. The study area extends from MD 611 to MD 378 (Baltimore Avenue) in the east-west direction and from 3rd Street to Somerset Street in the north-south direction. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Maryland State Highway Administration (MD SHA) are the lead agencies for the project. Cooperating agencies include the National Marine Fishers Service (NOAA - Fisheries), The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), The U.S. Coast Guard, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

The purpose of this study is to develop a transportation solution that addresses transportation operational inadequacies and structural deficiencies as well as to improve safety for all users on the US 50 crossing of the Sinepuxent Bay in Worcester County, Maryland.

The US 50 Bridge over the Sinepuxent Bay is officially named the Harry W. Kelley Memorial Bridge and is 64 years old. It is considered functionally obsolete due to its narrow curb-to-curb roadway width, which is substandard for the traffic volumes that it carries, particularly during summer months due to recreational traffic. The need to maintain a safe and efficient crossing of US 50 is very important, not only because it provides access to and from the commercial center of Ocean City, but also because it serves as one of only three evacuation routes from the barrier peninsula in case of emergency situations.

2. Alternatives Considered

There were 8 alternatives that were developed for this study. The following is a description of each alternative as well as reasons why some were dropped from detailed study.

Alternative 1 - No-Build - No major improvements are included under Alternative 1, the No-Build Alternative. Minor short term improvements would occur as part of routine maintenance and safety improvements.

Alternative 2 - Rehabilitation - This alternative involves rehabilitation to the existing bridge with the addition of a separate fishing pier for fisherman, wider sidewalks for pedestrians and cyclists, and adding aesthetics such as lighting and archways.

Alternative 3 - One-Way Pair - This alternative includes the use of the existing bridge for one-way inbound/eastbound traffic and the construction of a new bridge to carry westbound traffic. This alternative was dropped from further consideration because it did not address the need to separate the pedestrians, bicyclists and fishermen from traffic, it would require the frequent draw bridge openings and extensive repairs to the existing bridge, and it received low support from the public.

Alternative 4 Modified - Fixed Span Bridge - Alternative 4 Modified includes a new slightly curved high-level fixed span bridge with 4 lanes. The bridge enters Ocean City north of the existing bridge, slightly above 1st Street, and connects into Philadelphia Avenue (one way southbound) and Baltimore Avenue (one way northbound). The existing bridge would be retained and possibly used for bicyclists, pedestrians, and fishermen.

Alternative 5 - South Parallel Bridge - This alternative includes a new 4 lane parallel bridge just south of US 50, tying back into Division Street. The bridge would have a higher draw span to reduce the number of bridge openings. This alternative would retain the existing bridge as a separate facility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and fishermen.

Alternative 5A - North Parallel Bridge - This alternative includes a new 4 lane parallel bridge just north of US 50, tying back into Division Street. The bridge would have a higher draw span to reduce the number of bridge openings. The existing bridge would be retained and possibly used for bicyclists, pedestrians, and fishermen.

Alternative 6 - 9th Street Connection - This alternative includes a new alignment for US 50 from west of MD 611, transversing north of the White Marlin Mall and tying into 9th Street in Ocean City. This alternative was dropped from further consideration due to public opposition, substantial impacts to tidal wetlands, changes to traffic patterns community impacts and cost.

Alternative 7 - Remove & Replace - This alternative includes the removal and replacement of the Harry W. Kelley Memorial Bridge. The Harry W. Kelley Memorial Bridge is listed on the SHA's Historic Bridge Inventory and is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It is 1 of 9 movable bridges in Maryland that are eligible for the NRHP. The bridge also serves as 1 of 3 evacuation routes from the barrier peninsula in case of emergency situations. Because the bridge is historic and it needs to be open to traffic in case an evacuation is necessary, alternatives which remove or significantly alter the bridge were dropped from consideration.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

A summary of the impacts associated with the alternatives retained for detailed study is presented in this section and in **Table S-2** which is located at the end of this summary.

1. Socioeconomic Environment

The assessment of Socioeconomic and Land Use Effects showed that communities adjacent to the bridge would experience impacts as a result of the build alternatives. These direct and proximity impacts are primarily to property and community cohesion, depending on which alternative is selected.

The No-Build Alternative and Alternative 2 (Rehabilitation) would not require any property acquisition or the displacement of any residential, commercial or other structures within the project area. The build alternatives would require right-of-way (ROW) acquisition, including residential and commercial displacements (**Table S-1**).

Table S-1: ROW and Displacements for Each Alternative Retained for Detailed Study

Alternative	Residential Displacements	Commercial Displacements	Other Displacements	ROW Required
Alternative 1	0	0	0	0
Alternative 2	0	0	0	0
Alternative 4 Modified	13	12	0	5.5
Alternative 5	8	2	0	3
Alternative 5A	6	2	0	3

There are no known concentrations of minority or low-income populations within the study area. While individual minority or low-income persons may be affected by 1 or more of the proposed alternatives, this impact would not constitute a disproportionately

high adverse effect to environmental justice populations. Additionally, though individual handicapped or elderly individuals may be affected by 1 or more alternatives, none of the alternatives would affect senior centers or assisted living facilities or access to them.

Commercial areas comprise most of Ocean City and surround US 50 on the mainland. This land use classification includes scattered residential parcels. Larger residential areas are primarily located in West Ocean City, both north and south of US 50. The water areas primarily consist of the Sinepuxent and Isle of Wight Bays. Forested and agricultural areas are located primarily in West Ocean City, towards the western edge of the study area. The wetlands are located on the bay-side of the mainland. Institutional land is scattered through the commercial land use on the Ocean City peninsula. It includes the U.S. Coast Guard Station, emergency service buildings, the Ocean City Elementary School and other public buildings. Beaches are located at the eastern edge of the study area in Ocean City.

Both Ocean City and West Ocean City are approaching build-out. Approximately 95 percent of the buildable land in the Town of Ocean City has been developed, while there are approximately 2,100 vacant, buildable lots in West Ocean City. Therefore, land use changes within the study area will come primarily from redevelopment.

The No-Build Alternative and Alternative 2 would not result in any direct change in land use within the study area, as neither requires any displacements or ROW acquisitions. Alternatives 4 Modified, 5, and 5A would result in the change of commercial land use (which includes some residences) to transportation land use. Because Ocean City has nearly reached build-out, this type of conversion would be required for almost any transportation improvement that must occur outside the existing transportation corridors. The build alternatives are consistent with local land use plans.

The Smart Growth Initiative requires state direct funding for highways and economic development to areas that are designated as Priority Funding Areas (PFAs). The project limits are entirely within the Ocean City PFA. Therefore, the project is in compliance with Smart Growth initiatives, regardless of the alternative that is selected.

SHA is coordinating with the emergency service providers for the study area. To date, only the Ocean City Police Department has responded and provided comments regarding the alternatives proposed for this project. The Ocean City Police Department believes that the Alternative 2 would not affect the emergency response times, but the other build alternatives would improve the emergency response times. SHA will continue to coordinate with all of the emergency response providers throughout the planning and design phases.

2. Natural Environment

The No-Build Alternative would have no impacts to the natural environment, unless pier replacement and/or pier stabilization is necessary to routinely maintain the bridge. However, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has expressed concern that the existing bridge and past scour protection measures have already affected the

hydrodynamics of Sinepuxent Bay and may be causing the erosion and possible migration of Skimmer Island, thereby negatively affecting the nesting habitat for the State-listed endangered royal tern (*Sterna maxima*) and black skimmer (*Rhynchops niger*) and several other colonial nesting waterbird species of conservation interest.

None of the alternatives would impact agricultural land.

Groundwater is the source of drinking water, the primary source of irrigation water, and the major source of freshwater to the coastal bays. The water supply in Ocean City is provided by a total of 23 production wells. These include 14 wells in the Ocean City Aquifer and 9 wells in the Manokin Aquifer. The proposed build alternatives would increase the amount of impervious surface in the study area by approximately 9% to 10%. Best Management Practices (BMPs), as found in the *2003 Critical Area 10% Rule Guidance Manual*, would be used throughout the project to provide water quality management for these new impervious areas as well as an overall reduction of pollutants from the existing condition.

All of the build alternatives would cross the Sinepuxent Bay. Avoiding and minimizing impacts to tidal waters of the U.S. (WUS) will be a priority as the project progresses through design. Avoidance and minimization may involve the design of steeper fill slopes, retaining walls, relocation of the bridge abutments to minimize the project footprint, minimization of the pier size and spacing and minimization of impacts during construction. Potential changes to the hydrology/hydraulics of Sinepuxent Bay, as a result of the build alternatives, have been evaluated by an expert in coastal hydrodynamics and sedimentation. The location and design of piers and abutments will be assessed throughout the design process to ensure that the project does not negatively affect the Bay's hydraulics.

A small tidal emergent wetland exists along the north side of US 50 on the western edge of Sinepuxent Bay. Alternatives 4 Modified and 5A would result in impacts of 0.03 acres and 0.01 acres of impacts, respectively. Alternative 5 would not impact wetlands. Anticipated impacts to WUS range from 0.72 to 0.75 acre. These impacts are associated with the construction of the bridge abutments and piers. Permits would be required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for impacts to wetlands and WUS. A Tidal Wetlands License could be required from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)/Maryland Board of Public Works for impacts to tidal wetlands and open waters. Mitigation for the impacts to open waters and wetlands would be required. Mitigation site searches are currently underway. Selection of the mitigation sites will be based on input from the state and federal regulatory and resource management agencies.

There are no forests or forest interior dwelling bird (FIDs) habitats located within the study area. There are no large or significant trees located within the study area.

The Maryland coastal bays support a high diversity of finfish (over 140 species) that utilize the area for feeding and nursery habitat (Wazniak and Hall, 2005). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA - Fisheries) has indicated that the study area and

vicinity contains Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for more than a dozen species of finfish managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and management Act. EFH is defined as “those waters and substrate necessary to federally managed fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity.” The U.S. 50 Crossing Study area is located along the boundary of two EFH summary designations, and affects waters of Isle of Wight Bay, Sinepuxent Bay, and the Ocean City Inlet.

The build alternatives are expected to have some short-term and/or long-term impacts to aquatic species in the immediate project area. Dredging and/or excavation activities during rehabilitation or new bridge construction may result in the temporary reduction of fish utilization in the area and minimal loss of shallow water habitat. Construction activities associated with a new bridge would likely cause temporary in-water disturbances, such as re-suspension of sediment and increased noise levels in the study area. Long-term impacts associated with the build alternatives would occur from the construction of the proposed footers. BMPs, such as turbidity curtains, may be employed to avoid and minimize the potential for re-suspended sediment movement and transport away from the construction site. In addition, power-driving of large diameter hollow steel piles will be conducted during the appropriate time of year (e.g., during winter months) to minimize adverse affects on aquatic species from shock waves produced by the driving action.

There is the potential for federally threatened and endangered marine turtles to be present within the study area and vicinity. These include the green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), Kemp’s ridleys (*Lepidochelys kemp*), leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and loggerhead turtles (*Caretta caretta*). Section 7 Endangered Species Act (ESA) Biological Assessment was completed in August 2007. It was developed to determine the effects of the proposed project on these federally threatened and endangered marine turtles. The Biological Assessment has determined that the proposed action is unlikely to impact turtle populations or critical habitats. No permanent impacts to sea turtle populations are anticipated since the project area does not support sea turtle nesting areas and most of the sea turtles are incidental, summer transients. Any impacts to sea turtles could be minimized by conducting in-water construction activities outside of the known window of sea turtle occurrences in Maryland (April 1st through November 30th).

Skimmer Island is a waterbird colony that supports a variety of breeding waterbirds, including the state-listed endangered black skimmer (*Rhynchops niger*), and is the only known location that supports the state-listed endangered royal tern (*Sterna maxima*). Skimmer Island is a flood tidal shoal system that provides essential nesting habitat for these state listed species, as well as other colonial nesting waterbird species of conservation interest.

There are no anticipated direct impacts to Skimmer Island, or to the rare, threatened and endangered (RT&E) species or their nesting habitat from any of the proposed alternatives. Potential indirect impacts to the state-listed endangered colonial waterbird species may include conflicts between traffic and birds in flight; the potential migration of Skimmer Island to the south which would place Skimmer Island closer to the existing

bridge and/or the build alternatives; the potential erosion of Skimmer Island due to changes in Sinepuxent Bay's hydraulics; and disturbance to the colonial nesting waterbirds during construction or due to a build alternative that places traffic closer to the habitat.

Minimization of impacts to colonial nesting birds will be achieved by following the construction time of year restrictions as recommended by DNR and providing a design which includes measures to minimize bird/traffic conflicts. A thorough analysis and modeling of the current sand migration patterns in Sinepuxent Bay, and analysis of the past, current, and future sand migration patterns for each of the alternatives (including the No-Build Alternative) was completed. Incorporating the results of the modeling into the design and location/placement of piers and/or scour protection measures will help to minimize the further migration or degradation of Skimmer Island.

3. Air Quality

None of the receptor sites in the project area yielded CO emissions in excess of the 8-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The project would not result in any meaningful changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions impacts from Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs).

No violations of the applicable State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (S/NAAQS) are expected from the project as Worcester County has been designated as not in "non-attainment" of the NAAQS for PM_{2.5}. Therefore, this project is exempt from regional or micro-scale PM_{2.5} analysis.

4. Noise Analysis

All impact analyses were performed in conformance with Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 772 (23 CFR Part 772) *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise* and the SHA *Sound Barrier Policy* (May 1998). Each noise sensitive area was analyzed to determine potential impacts from each of the project alternatives. Impacts were assessed based upon the following criteria: projected 2030 design year noise levels approaching or exceeding 67 dBA (66 dBA or greater), or projected 2030 design year noise levels exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dBA or more.

Sound barriers were found to be warranted for Alternatives 5 and 5A at 2 Noise Sensitive Areas (NSAs 3 and 4) due to noise levels equal to or exceeding the 66 dBA criteria. As such, feasibility and reasonableness of mitigation was investigated for both NSAs.

Feasible mitigation for NSA 3 could not be developed due to maintenance of local vehicular and pedestrian access. Potential mitigation designed to protect this NSA would require a vertical barrier to be placed between the community and Philadelphia Avenue which would displace the pedestrian walkway and encroach upon the Philadelphia Avenue travel lanes.

Feasible mitigation also could not be developed for NSA 4 due to maintenance of local vehicular and pedestrian access to the NSA.

Reasonableness would also be an issue given that predicted future “build” noise levels would not exceed future “No-Build” noise levels (within 3 dBA) in any of the 4 NSAs, and in many cases are lower due to the shadow zone created by a higher bridge structure. Because there have been no capacity increases made to the bridge since the original construction, a cumulative effects analysis does not apply. Therefore, mitigation consideration does not meet SHA feasibility or reasonableness criteria for either NSA.

5. Hazardous Materials

A total of 11 potential hazardous materials sites have the potential to be impacted by at least one of the build alternatives. All of the 11 sites are ranked as having a high or medium/high potential for environmental concern. The potential for impact depends on the design and depth of required grading. Subsurface water conveyance structures and foundations, contaminated media (soil, groundwater), and in-place Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) have the potential to be impacted depending on the final design. Further investigation into the specific location of reported permanently out-of-use USTs in relation to proposed US 50 bridge construction activities will be conducted before property is purchased and construction is initiated.

6. Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area

The entire study area is located within the Intensely Developed Area as classified by the Critical Area Commission for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays. The Atlantic Coastal Bays Protection Act also requires the establishment of a 100-foot, undisturbed, naturally vegetated or planted Buffer landward from the mean high water line of tidal waters or from the edge of tidal wetlands or tributary streams. The build alternatives would have impacts on the Critical Area on both the west and east ends of the bridge. The anticipated impacts include earth disturbance, removal of vegetation, placement of fill, and increased impervious area. The impacts are associated with the tie-in of the bridge to existing US 50 on the west end and to city streets on the east end. The build alternatives would also impact the 100-foot buffer. Impacts to the Critical Area would range from 2.2 to 5.8 acres and impacts to the 100-foot buffer range from 1.0 to 1.2 acres. Continued coordination with the Critical Area Commission will be necessary to ensure compliance with the policies of the Critical Area Act.

Table S-2: Environmental Impacts and Costs by Alternative

	Alt. 1 (No-Build)	Alt. 2	Alt. 4 Modified	Alt. 5	Alt. 5A
Residential Displacements (number)	0	0	13	8	6
Commercial Displacements (number)	0	0	12	2	2
Farmland Impacts (acres)	0	0	0	0	0
Park Impacts (acres)	0	0	0	0	0
Historic Sites (number)	0	0	0	0	0
Waters of the U.S. Impacts (permanent)(acres)	0	0	.75	.72	.73
Wetlands Impacts (permanent)(acres)	0	0	.03	0	.01
100-Year Floodplain Impacts (acres)	0	0	4.3	1.1	1.6
Forest Impacts (acres)	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials (Number of Properties Affected)	0	0	9	2	0
RTE Species (Acres habitat directly impacted)	0	0	0	0	0
Significant Trees (number)	0	0	0	0	0
Critical Area Disturbance (acres)	0	0	5.8	2.2	2.5
Critical Area 100-Foot Buffer Disturbance (acres)	0	0	1.0	1.0	1.2
Impervious Surface (acres)	0	0.5	5.6	5.2	5.3
Noise Abatement	0	0	0	0	0
Cost (millions)	\$0	\$107	\$340	\$289	\$268

Indirect and Cumulative Effects

An Indirect and Cumulative Effects (ICE) Analysis was developed for this study. Indirect effects are caused by an action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Cumulative effects are impacts on the environment that results from the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes the action. Overall, indirect and cumulative effects associated with the US 50 bridge over Sinepuxent Bay project are anticipated to be minor due to the existing high level of development near the project location and the existing Smart Growth laws and land use plans and zoning regulations of Worcester County and Ocean City. However, the greatest potential for indirect impacts is attributed to the effects that Alternatives 4 Modified, 5, and 5A may have on Skimmer Island. Each of these alternatives has the potential to change the hydrodynamics and pattern of sand migration in the bay due to the additional bridge piers and supports. These changes could indirectly impact aquatic habitats, fisheries, and the endangered waterbird colony on Skimmer Island.

C. PERMITS REQUIRED

It is anticipated that the construction of the build alternatives for this project could require the following permits:

<u>Permit/Approvals Required</u>	<u>Permitting/Approval Agency</u>
Section 404/Section 10 Permit	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Coastal Zone Consistency Determination	MDE
Tidal Wetlands License	MD Board of Public Works/MDE
Stormwater Management Plan Approval	MDE
Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Approval	MDE
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for Construction	MDE
Critical Area Approval	Critical Area Commission
Bridge Construction Permit	U.S. Coast Guard
Section 7 Biological Opinion	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA – Fisheries) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Section 106	Maryland Historic Trust (MHT)

D. AREAS OF CONTROVERSY OR SPECIAL CONCERN

The proximity of the US 50 bridge to Skimmer Island has been an area of particular concern throughout the public and agency involvement process. These concerns are summarized as follows:

Skimmer Island

Skimmer Island is a flood tidal shoal system that provides essential nesting habitat for two State-listed endangered species, the black skimmer and the royal tern. Both species require unvegetated sand bars for breeding and nesting habitat and Skimmer Island represents the only viable nesting location for the royal tern in the State. The DNR is concerned that Skimmer Island may be steadily migrating to the south or closer to the

US 50 bridge, and may eventually move underneath or south of the existing bridge. DNR will consider the project's future actions under the provisions of Title 08 in COMAR regarding the potential to "jeopardize the continued existence" of these species, to avoid an undesirable and potentially unlawful outcome in the context of conserving viable populations of wildlife across the State.

The DNR has requested that SHA provide an analysis of the flood tidal shoal migration and change, including modeling and projections over the long term (25 to 75 years); an analysis of the impacts upon flood tidal shoal migration and change that may be attributable to the specific options retained for further study (i.e. how the project itself may influence the migration); an analysis of the potential for "take" of listed species under current statute which would result from any of the alternatives being retained for detailed study, including consideration of any increase in traffic volumes related to the project; and present avoidance, minimization, and mitigation options related to potential impacts of long-term habitat loss to black skimmers and royal terns that might result from the alternatives.

To address DNR's concerns, a hydrodynamic and sediment transport model will be applied to the 5 alternatives. The model application will indicate possible impacts on Skimmer Island and other coastal areas over the short and long term. The model will also be used to assess the effects of specific pier placement and design options in an effort to avoid impacts to Skimmer Island, and to potentially reverse the past and current degradation and migration of the Island.

E. RELATED PROJECTS IN THE STUDY AREA

The MD SHA performed repairs on the US 50 Bridge to maintain the bridge's operational integrity in January and February 2008. These repairs included replacing the existing bascule span grid decking, sidewalk grid decking and purlins (small beams that support the grid decking) with galvanized decking, which prevents corrosion of the bridge steel.

In addition, the MD SHA has begun overlaying the westbound bridge deck. The project will be suspended by Memorial Day 2008 and restarted in March 2009 when the eastbound bridge deck will be improved.

Please note these repairs are not part of improvements associated with Alternative 2. Alternative 2 includes additional repairs and improvements to the US 50 bridge.

F. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Several Public Workshops and Newsletters have been used to solicit public involvement in the US 50 Crossing Study. A Public Informational Open House was held in Ocean City in June 2005 to introduce the project to the public and to solicit public responses on the project and potential solutions. Another Informational Open House was held in October 2005 to present the conceptual alternatives and purpose and need of the project to the public and to receive public input. A total of 145 individuals attended this open

house. Then in June 2006, an Alternates Informational Public Workshop was held to display the preliminary alternatives for public review and comment. The Maryland State Highway Administration (MD SHA) received a total of 341 responses from the public. The responses provided important information concerning public approval of the various alternatives. In May-June 2007 an Informational Public Workshop was held to present the Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS). A total of 50 individuals attended this workshop and the MD SHA received 342 responses to the ARDS. At the May-June 2007 Public Workshop the Coordination Plan summary was also on display. The Coordination Plan was circulated to the agencies on February 29, 2008 and can be accessed by the public for review and comment via the project's website.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

The following Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) is a requirement of the Maryland Environmental Policy Act and Maryland Department of Transportation Order 11.01.06.02. Its use is in keeping with the provisions of 1500.4 (k), 1506.2 and 1506.6 of the Council of Environmental Quality Regulations, effective July 31, 1979, which recommend that duplication of Federal, State and Local procedures be integrated into a single process.

The checklist identifies specific areas of the natural and socioeconomic environment that have been considered while preparing this environmental impact statement. The reviewer can refer to the appropriate section of the document as indicated in the "Comment" column of the form for a description of specific characteristics of the resource and the potential impacts, beneficial or adverse, that the action may incur. The "No" column indicates that during the scoping and coordination processes, a specific area of the environment was not identified to be within the project area or would not be impacted by the proposed action.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
A. Land Use Considerations			
1. Will the action be within the 100 year floodplain?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.C.5</u>
2. Will the action require a permit for construction or alteration within the 50 year floodplain?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
3. Will the action require a permit for dredging, filling, draining or alteration of a wetland?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.C.4</u>
4. Will the action require a permit for the construction or operation of facilities for solid waste disposal including dredge and excavation spoil?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
5. Will the action occur on slopes exceeding 15%?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
6. Will the action require a grading plan or a sediment control permit?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.C.2</u>
7. Will the action require a mining permit for deep or surface mining?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
8. Will the action require a permit for drilling a gas or oil well?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
9. Will the action require a permit for airport construction?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
10. Will the action require a permit for the crossing of the Potomac River by conduits, cables or other like devices?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
11. Will the action affect the use of a public recreation area, park, forest, wildlife management area, scenic river or wildland?	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
12. Will the action affect the use of any natural or manmade features that are unique to the county, state, or nation?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.B.1</u>
13. Will the action affect the use of an archeological or historical site or structure?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.B.1 and 2</u>
B. Water Use Considerations			
14. Will the action require a permit for the change of the course, current, or cross-section of a stream or other body of water?	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u>See Section IV.C.4</u>

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
15. Will the action require the construction, alteration, or removal of a dam, reservoir, or waterway obstruction?		X	
16. Will the action change the overland flow of stormwater or reduce the absorption capacity of the ground?	X		See Section IV.C.2
17. Will the action require a permit for the drilling of a water well?		X	
18. Will the action require a permit for water appropriation?		X	
19. Will the action require a permit for the construction and operation of facilities for treatment or distribution of water?		X	
20. Will the project require a permit for the construction and operation of facilities for sewage treatment and/or land disposal of liquid waste derivatives?		X	
21. Will the action result in any discharge into surface or sub-surface water?	X		See Section IV.C.3
22. If so, will the discharge affect ambient water quality parameters and/or require a discharge permit?		X	See Section IV.C.3
C. Air Use Considerations			
23. Will the action result in any discharge into the air?	X		See Section IV.E
24. If so, will the discharge affect ambient air quality parameters or produce a disagreeable odor?		X	See Section IV.E
25. Will the action generate additional noise which differs in character or level from present conditions?	X		See Section IV.F
26. Will the action preclude future use of related air space?		X	
27. Will the action generate any radiological, electrical, magnetic, or light influences?		X	
D. Plants and Animals			
28. Will the action cause the disturbance, reduction or loss of any rare, unique or valuable plant or animal?			See Section IV.8. a. & Table IV-5
29. Will the action result in the significant reduction or loss of any fish or wildlife habitats?			See Section IV.7. b.

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
30. Will the action require a permit for the use of pesticides, herbicides or other biological, chemical or radiological control agents?		X	
E. Socio-Economic			
31. Will the action result in a pre-emption or division of properties or impair their economic use?	X		See Section IV.A.1
32. Will the action cause relocation of activities, structures, or result in a change in the population density or distribution?	X		See Section IV.A.1
33. Will the action alter land values?		X	See Section IV.A.2
34. Will the action affect traffic flow and volume?		X	
35. Will the action affect the production, extra action, harvest or potential use of a scarce or economically important resource?		X	
36. Will the action require a license to construct a sawmill or other plant for the manufacture of forest products?		X	
37. Is the action in accord with federal, state, regional and local comprehensive or functional plans- including zoning?	X		See Section IV.A.3
38. Will the action affect the employment opportunities for persons in the area?			See Section IV.A.2
39. Will the action affect the ability of the area to attract new sources of tax revenue?		X	See Section IV.A.2
40. Will the action discourage present sources of tax revenue from remaining in the area, or affirmatively encourage them to relocate elsewhere?		X	See Section IV.A.2
41. Will the action affect the ability of the area to attract tourism?		X	
F. Other Considerations			
42. Could the action endanger the public health, safety or welfare?		X	
43. Could the action be eliminated without deleterious affects to the public health, safety, welfare or the natural environment?		X	

